

FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS – LOBBYISTS AND LOBBYING

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Defining Lobbyists

What is a Lobbyist?

Lobbyist means "any person who **engages oneself** for pay or other consideration for the purpose of influencing, directly or **indirectly**, and whether by such person or through any agent or employee or other person in any manner **whatsoever**, the **policy making process** of the City and County of Honolulu." ROH Sec. 3-13.2.

What is Lobbying?

Lobbying means "certain activities of a person who is included in the definition of a "lobbyist" ... and not specifically excluded under Section 3-13.3(e). "Lobbying" shall be deemed to include the representation, by any person, whether or not compensated, of an association, corporation or organization that accepts membership dues or contributions with the understanding that a portion of the funds so received will be used to influence the policy making process of the City and County of Honolulu." ROH Sec. 3-13.2.

When am I not a Lobbyist? Are there exceptions?

Lobbyist registration and reporting requirements do not apply to:

- (1) Any person who merely appears at a public hearing before the council, its committees, or city agencies to express such person's opinion on pending legislation and/or rules and regulations involved in the city's policymaking process.
- (2) Any federal, state or county official or employee acting in such person's official capacity.
- (3) Any elected public official acting in such person's official capacity.
- (4) A newspaper or other regularly published periodical, radio or television station (including any individual who owns, publishes or is employed by a newspaper or periodical or radio or television station) which in the ordinary course of business publishes news items, editorials or other comments, or paid advertisements, which directly or indirectly urge the taking of legislative or executive action, if the newspaper, periodical, radio, or television station or individual engages in no further or other activities in connection with influencing decisions in the policy making process of the City and County of Honolulu.
- (5) Any person representing a bona fide church solely for the purpose of protecting the public right to practice doctrines of the church.
- (6) Any unpaid volunteer representing a nonprofit organization, association or corporation; provided that the organization, association or corporation registers with the Honolulu Ethics Commission and designates such volunteer to represent it. ROH Sec. 3-13.3(e).

Registering Lobbyists

How do I register as a Lobbyist?

Submit a Lobbyist Registration form to the Honolulu Ethics Commission. Lobbyist Registration Forms can be found at: <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/lobbyist.html>.

Beginning in calendar year 2019, Registration forms are dated. Be sure to use the correct form. For example, if you plan to lobby in 2019, use the 2019 Lobbyist Registration form found on our website. If you are registering for the preceding calendar year (i.e., 2018), please contact our office.

Does my registration expire? When do they expire?

Yes. Your Lobbyist Registration **expires at the end of each calendar year**. You must re-register with the Honolulu Ethics Commission **at the beginning of each calendar year** during which you plan to lobby.

As a reminder, a **Lobbyist Annual Report** form, detailing your lobbying activities from the preceding year, is due at the end of each calendar year. Annual Report forms can be found at <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/lobbyist.html>.

Can I register to lobby for multiple organizations on one form?

No. You may register to lobby for multiple organizations, but you must use a separate form for each organization. This requirement also applies to Lobbyist Annual Report forms—you must submit an Annual Report form for each organization.

When should I register as a Lobbyist?

You must register as a Lobbyist **within five (5) days** after engaging yourself to conduct lobbying activities or receiving contributions, membership dues or a fee or salary.

Continuing lobbyists must **submit their Registration form no later than January 10 of each year**, and may register as soon as they receive the Ethics Commission's courtesy memo.

How will I know if I am a registered Lobbyist with the City?

Upon receipt of your Registration form, the Ethics Commission will send a confirming message to you via email. The Commission will post a Lobbyist Registration and a Termination List on the website.

Does the Honolulu Ethics Commission accept other Lobbyist Registration forms, such as the State's form?

No. The Honolulu Ethics Commission only accepts its Lobbyist Registration and Annual Report forms.

Can I register with the Honolulu Ethics Commission if I want to lobby at the State or in another county?

No. The Honolulu Ethics Commission only has jurisdiction over Lobbyists who influence the policy making process of the City and County of Honolulu.

If you want to lobby at the State or in another county, contact the appropriate agency in that jurisdiction. Contact information for the Hawai'i State Ethics Commission and other county's board of ethics can be found at the end of these FAQs.

Terminating Lobbyist Registration

I no longer lobby in the City and County of Honolulu. How do I terminate my Lobbyist Registration?

Complete the **Lobbyist Registration form, including Part II.B., *No Longer Lobbying***, and submit the form to the Ethics Commission. **Note**: You do not need to fill out Part V, *Authorization to Lobby*.

Additionally, **please submit an Annual Report form that reflects your lobbying activities up through your termination date.**

Beginning in calendar year 2019, the Honolulu Ethics Commission will only accept termination notices via the Registration form. **Termination letters will not be accepted.**

I am terminating my lobbying activities for more than one organization. Can I terminate all of them with one form?

No. When terminating, Lobbyists must use one form per organization. The same procedure applies to Annual Report forms.

Last year, I terminated my registration with Organization A. Organization A just asked me to lobby for them again. Can I register again to lobby for Organization A?

Yes. Submit a Registration form **within five (5) days** after engaging yourself to conduct lobbying activities for Organization A or receiving contributions, membership dues or a fee or salary.

Submitting Lobbyist Forms

When do I submit Lobbyist forms?

Initial Lobbyist Registration forms – due **within five (5) days** after engaging yourself to conduct lobbying activities or receiving contributions, membership dues or a fee or salary.

Annual Lobbyist Registration forms – **January 10th of each year.**

Lobbyist Annual Report forms – January 10th of each year.

Lobbyist Termination – due **within ten (10) days** of ceasing lobbying activities (use the Registration form, Part II.B.). If terminating at the end of the calendar year, submit your form no later than January 10th of each year.

Update Lobbyist Information – due **within ten (10) days** of the change (e.g., new address, new telephone number, new email address, etc.).

How can I submit my Lobbyist form(s)?

Submit your forms to the Honolulu Ethics Commission:

Email: ethics@honolulu.gov

Fax: [\(808\) 768-7768](tel:(808)768-7768)

U.S. Mail: Kapālama Hale, [925 Dillingham Blvd., Suite 190, Honolulu, HI 96817](#)

Hand delivery: Kapālama Hale, [925 Dillingham Blvd., Suite 190, Honolulu, HI 96817](#)

For additional assistance, call the Commission's office at **(808) 768-9242**.

How do I update my Lobbyist information?

- 1) Submit a copy of your Registration form with initialed corrections;
- 2) Submit a new Registration or Annual Report form; or
- 3) Call our office at (808) 768-9242 and ask staff to input your updates.

How are my Lobbyist forms processed?

Forms are **date-stamped upon receipt**, whether via email, fax, U.S. Mail, or hand delivery. Staff will contact you if there are discrepancies or errors.

Can the public access my Lobbyist forms?

Yes. Honolulu Ethics Commission Lobbyist forms are public documents. Lobbyist forms are posted on the website at <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/lobbyist.html>.

For Public

Can members of the public access Lobbyist forms?

Yes. Lobbyist forms are public documents and can be viewed free of charge on our website: <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/lobbyist.html>.

Is there a list of registered Lobbyists? How do I know if a Lobbyist submitted their Annual Report form?

The Honolulu Ethics Commission **compiles a Lobbyist registration list**, which can be found at <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/lobbyist.html>. The list contains names of registered city Lobbyists and the organizations for which they lobby. **Annual Report forms are also posted on this site.**

Beginning in calendar year 2017, the Commission **compiles a Historical Lobbyist List**, detailing Lobbyists who registered with the Commission.

Beginning in calendar year 2018, the Commission **compiles a Lobbyist Termination List**, which contains the names of Lobbyists who terminated their lobbying activities during the calendar year, the relevant organization, and termination date.

Where can I find a Lobbyist registered with the State of Hawai'i or another jurisdiction?

You must search the State of Hawai'i Ethics Commission website for State-registered Lobbyists or other jurisdiction's website for Lobbyists registered elsewhere. The Honolulu Ethics Commission's Lobbyist Registration list only includes Lobbyists registered to lobby in the City and County of Honolulu.

Where can I look for more information on City-registered Lobbyists?

All City-registered Lobbyist information is available on the Commission's website: <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/lobbyist.html>.

Where can I find the City's Lobbyist laws?

The Honolulu Ethics Commission provides links to laws governing Lobbyists and lobbying with the City at <https://www.honolulu.gov/ethics/laws.html>.

When are the Lobbyist Registration List, Termination List and Annual Reports uploaded to the website?

Updated lists are uploaded in March or April of each year. Thereafter, updated lists are uploaded quarterly.

Miscellaneous

Who do I contact with questions about City Lobbyists and lobbying matters?

Contact the Honolulu Ethics Commission at (808) 768-9242 or via email at ethics@honolulu.gov.

Who do I contact with questions about other Hawai'i Lobbyists and lobbying matters?

For Lobbyists in other Hawai'i jurisdictions, please contact:

- Hawai'i State Ethics Commission - (808) 587-0460
- County of Hawai'i Board of Ethics - (808) 961-8251
- County of Kaua'i Board of Ethics - (808) 241-4917
- County of Maui Board of Ethics - (808) 270-7742